

157.197 Kentucky Special Education Mentor Program -- Criteria.

- (1) The Kentucky Board of Education shall promulgate administrative regulations to establish the criteria for the Kentucky Special Education Mentor Program that shall be implemented by July 1, 1999. The designation of "Kentucky Special Education Mentor" shall be given to the state's most outstanding and highly skilled persons who are certified to teach or administer special education and who are willing to accept assignments in districts whose special education programs are found to be noncompliant with state or federal requirements. The assignments shall require the mentor to:
 - (a) Work in a district or school on a full-time or part-time basis for a designated period of time to assist the staff with creating and implementing its special education improvement plan as required in KRS 157.224. The mentor shall have the authority to review and amend decisions previously made by the district or school staff. If a highly skilled educator under KRS 158.782 is assigned to the same site as the mentor, they shall share responsibilities under policy of the Department of Education;
 - (b) Help to increase the effectiveness of the staff, parents, the civic and business community, and government and private agencies in improving the school's performance with exceptional students and other students at risk of school failure;
 - (c) Evaluate and make recommendations on the retention, dismissal, or transfer of certified staff in a noncompliant district or school;
 - (d) Recommend up to ten (10) additional work days annually to be paid for by the Department of Education for personnel in affected schools who work with exceptional students for planning, working with parents and guardians, curriculum development, or other activities that will help the district or school meet the goals of its improvement plan; and
 - (e) Complete an intensive training program, provided by the Department of Education and approved by the Kentucky Board of Education, prior to being assigned to assist a district's or school's staff with creating and implementing its district or school improvement plan. The training program shall include but not be limited to instruction in the methods of personnel evaluation, district or school organization, curriculum, and assessment. The training shall be made available to local district personnel on a cost recovery basis.
- (2) The Kentucky Special Education Mentor Program criteria shall include:
 - (a) A selection process that shall allow for self nomination, provide for a broad spectrum of instructional positions, and generate statewide representation. Nominations of qualified special educators who have retired since July 1, 1994, shall be considered. Special education professionals and representatives of various advocacy and constituent groups shall be included in the development of the selection process and the review of applicants;
 - (b) Each recipient shall receive a monetary award of two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) when selected and shall also be paid in accordance with his or her

current salary for other program requirements requiring additional days of employment under subsection (1) of this section. The Department of Education shall be responsible for all expenses incurred as a result of the Kentucky Special Education Mentor Program, except those expenses associated with the funding of the position of the person who replaces the Kentucky Special Education Mentor when that person is assigned to a noncompliant school or district;

- (c) The Kentucky Special Education Mentor assigned to a noncompliant district or school shall receive a salary supplement of thirty-five percent (35%) of their base annual salary for each year of service in that capacity. Retired mentors shall be paid for their rank and experience on the district's salary schedule plus the salary supplement. The state board shall determine if reimbursement for vehicle mileage shall be allowed. If the assigned school achieves the threshold level in the next biennial review, the mentor shall receive his or her portion of the reward due to the entire staff calculated on his or her base salary regardless of decisions made by the school staff under KRS 158.6455;
- (d) The Kentucky Special Education Mentor shall be granted professional leave under KRS 161.770 for up to two (2) years if determined by the state board to be necessary. Kentucky Special Education Mentors shall not lose any employee benefits as a result of their special assignments to a school or district; and
- (e) A Kentucky Special Education Mentor shall not be assigned to a school or to a district assignment in the district in which the educator is employed.

Effective: July 15, 1998

History: Created 1998 Ky. Acts ch. 514, sec. 3, effective July 15, 1998.

Legislative Research Commission Note (7/15/98). Although 1998 Ky. Acts ch. 514, sec. 3, contained a citation to "Section 5 of [the] Act" (codified at KRS 157.200), it is clear from context that Section 6 (codified at KRS 157.224) was intended. This latter reference has been used for codification under KRS 7.136(1)(h).